

IMPACT

March 1996

press

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DIVORCE DISHONESTY: Child Abuse Fraud

Inside:

**FBI Wiretap Proposal:
Protection or Prison?**

**Good vs. Evil:
Two Sides Explored**

**Employee Drug Testing
Self Incrimination?**

**Freedom:
Is America Really Free?**



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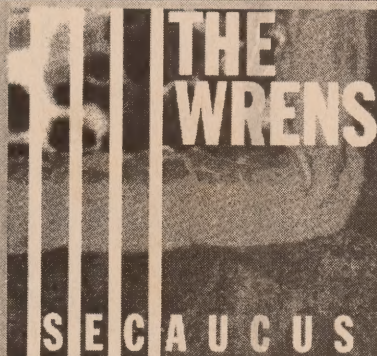
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BANDIT QUEEN	PITCHBLEND	THE WRENS
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POSSUM DIXON	MEM SHANNON	

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of **IMPACT** is to seek the truth and apply that knowledge to problems and concepts that exist within our society. For far too long we have allowed the world around us to lead our lives. We have relied on others to answer our questions and solve our problems. The truth **IMPACT** sees is not stated as fact, but as informed opinion open to debate. This is because attitudes and beliefs may change during the search for truth; change is inevitable when searching for truth. **IMPACT** is a forum for informed thought, founded on the belief that through knowledge and activism one can make the changes necessary in their society to further the development of mankind. **IMPACT** will not cater to the academic elite; all people should be given the chance to expand their horizons. **IMPACT** will not only present facts, but always try to present solutions. If one is not given a chance, one may never achieve greatness. This publication is founded on the idea that failure is not the end, but a foundation upon which to build. This publication is a creative forum for expression. This publication is a voice. This publication is, in essence, a pillar of individualism and humanism.

In The News

Producing Porn In Privacy

by Lori Stacy

We are all employed sometime in our lives and are paid for the hours we actually work. Does that still leave our employers the right to control what we do on our own time? In the case of Robert Walenski, a twelfth grade English teacher at Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School in Massachusetts, the school is attempting to control his private time. Walenski was fired due to his participation and production of several pornographic videos (*the exact number is arguable and will not be known until the case is heard in court*).

Walenski did not use any students in his videos and therefore did nothing illegal. Michael D. MacCafferey, a school superintendent, stated that Walenski used poor judgment. Should poor judgment in your personal life affect your employment? If a teacher chooses to indulge in alcohol on his own time and doesn't allow it to interfere with his work, should he be fired? What if a female teacher decided to have an abortion, would she lose her job? Many people question the morality of these examples, but the fact is, all of these are perfectly legal. They are personal, not professional decisions.

Walenski's students are protesting his firing. They feel that his performance in the classroom was not affected by his personal involvement in pornographic films and therefore, he should not be fired.

Another interesting aspect of this story is that the only reason the school found out about the films is that a member of Walenski's community saw one of the films in a pornographic video store. What are the chances that the resident's morality is being questioned for his interest in pornography? Is he at risk of losing his job?

If a company was willing to pay us twenty-four hours a day, we might be more willing to sacrifice our personal decisions and be more considerate of the company's stand on certain issues. However, if an employee's performance is satisfactory, his personal decisions are his own.

Editors Note: We have contacted Mr. Walenski. Unfortunately, there is a court case pending and, therefore, a gag order. Mr. Walenski will be speaking out once this process is finished.

Side Note: If we choose to be silent on issues of personal freedom infringement, then our lives will never be our own. We need to learn to stand-up for the rights of others. We need to learn to fight for the causes we believe in, and maybe then, Mr. Walenski wouldn't have to wonder if he'll ever be allowed to teach again.



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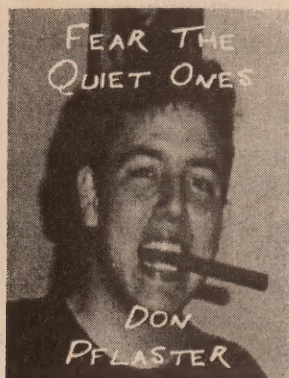
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Good vs. Evil



What is that great force that separates human beings from the animal kingdom? Some people would say nothing, that we are animals ourselves, at the mercy of our drives. People like Joe Friday would say, "Because we use cutlery, and we're capable of controlling our sexual urges." Interesting also. But it's something much more complex, something that has spawned religions, wars, and intolerance. I think it is because we have a personal sense of right and wrong. We look at certain events and happenings, call some

of them good, and some of them bad. When we're talking about good and evil, right and wrong, yin and yang, we're talking about the same thing. Opposites, black and white.

Desires are the true enemy of any force in power. When people can't get what they want, they become bitter, sometimes violent, which may lead them to turn against the ruling regime. And we can't have revolution in society, so we'll tell them that their dreams of a better world (through the destruction of the present one) are evil. We'll tell them that the people on the other side of the border, who think differently, are evil. We'll tell them what's good, too... family values, pro-life, going to some building with two perpendicular pieces of wood on top every Sunday.

Take the oil war in the Gulf... The Iraqis think we're evil. We think they're evil. Why? I've never met an Iraqi person before. These "evils" were indoctrinated into the populace from the greed of our governments. Power-hungry men who couldn't get what they wanted declared holy war. That's all it comes down to. Even President Bush said, "This is about *good and evil, right and wrong!*" Sure, George. Securing the interests of the United States economy is automatically good and right by default.

So what's a good way to get the populace on your side?

Tell them that what you want is coming straight from the moral center of the universe, God himself. Out of fear for their eternal souls, they won't question you. Let me tell you a story about that.

A long time ago, a bunch of people wrote something called the Bible. It claimed to contain the will of God, though throughout its pages, contradictions existed which defied that very possibility. Yet people still clung to its words, and elected religious leaders to help interpret God's will. These leaders placed the Earth at the center of the solar system, and excommunicated anyone who thought differently. Those dissenters were called blasphemers and labeled "evil," simply for stating what they knew to be truth. That, friends, is why organized religion doesn't work. Man cannot give God an opinion. As Richard Bach pointed out in *Running From Safety*, even the au-

thor of Genesis thought he could give an opinion to God. "God looked down on the firmament, and saw that it was good." In reality, I don't think God has an opinion. I disagree with the Christian God. Is that very fair to me? I'm still what I perceive to be a good person, but because God doesn't think so, I get smitten? That's tyranny! People don't want dictators to exist on Earth, but when it comes to the big dictator in the sky, they'll roll over on command.

What must be understood is that one person's white is another person's black. Take murder for example. Is murder good? No. Is murder bad, then? Yes. But wait... what if the person being murdered is a convicted child rapist/murderer or if they're trying to kill you and your family? What then? Does murdering them now become good? Not everyone agrees either way. All of the people in the world have made up their minds one way about it. Which way is the right way? *Mine*, you think. Of course. People think that their belief is the best, the *most good* if you will, because if it wasn't, they'd change it. Humans will adopt the belief that helps them cope best with their present life, and their goods and bads will be the summation of all of their experiences.

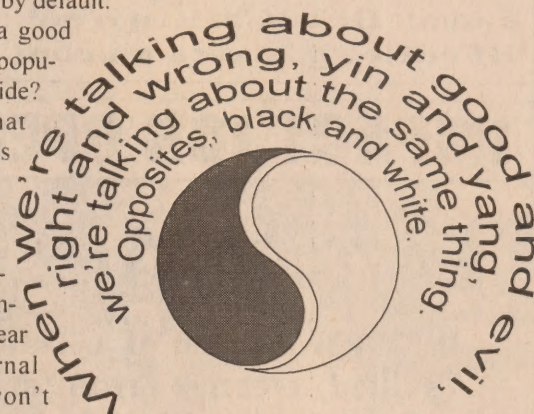
Believing in good and evil is about as boring as a game of checkers. There are red pieces and black pieces, and only one direction in which to move. If your whole life-plan is laid out ahead of you, with good roads and evil roads, it is a small matter to decide which roads to take. There would be signposts at every turn, each saying *good this way or bad this way*. But we all know that it's not nearly as simple as that. Every turn on the road has thousands of consequences, each of which must be analyzed thoroughly (though they aren't always) before the turn is made. Because of the complexity of the decisions and the thousands of results possible for each, I say that no event is an absolute good or an absolute evil.

Life is much more like a game of chess. More possibilities, more pieces, more *thought*. Each side is looking out for their own best interests. However, if we expand the analogy to dear planet Earth, there are far more players than two. If we count only human beings, there are almost six billion pieces. So basically, we've got a chessboard with an infinite number of squares, with six billion pieces, some weak as pawns, some mighty as queens.

If God were to create a world with the influence of Satan, as Christians believe, then evil would be coming from some red cavern with a lot of fire below us. OK, I'll buy that for now. This evil is sent up into the world to tempt people into "sinning." OK, I'll buy that too. But where does the evil manifest itself? Once the evil is in the world, how does it tempt? It comes in the form of humans trying to persuade other humans to be evil? I *don't* buy that. If all the humans on the Earth have the same susceptibility to evil influences and the same choice and God's up there keeping score, how can we perpetrate evil ourselves? The very presence of evil would indicate that humans are beyond self-control, that some red guy with a pitchfork is dangling temptresses in front of us with strings from a marionette, just to steal our souls. That's the story, no matter how one rewords it. It's shallow, and it reeks of a story that an extremely stoned person would write. It's an explanation of the universe, which can't be explained. It's no less ridiculous than the concept of the Greek gods, people behind the scenes that run everything. No, I'm sorry, I just don't buy it. I like to think I have a say in what goes on in the universe.

Take no notice of that man behind the curtain.

People don't want dictators to exist on Earth, but when it comes to the big dictator in the sky, they'll roll over on command.



Tapping In On Privacy

A Half-billion in tax dollars so the F.B.I. can listen in on Americans?

*as explored by
Jeffrey-John Nunziata
photo illustration by Joe Solari*

In a time when the nation's financial solvency appears to be in an obvious dire state, it might disturb even the most conservative that the federal government has sanctioned the FBI half billion dollar (\$500,000,000) National Wiretap System, which poses a threat to the freedom, privacy and civil liberties of every American. House Resolution (H.R.) 4922, entitled, "Interception of Digital and Other Communications," requires that all telecommunication carriers implement undetectable, remote wiretapping of anyone for federal, state and local agencies for "law enforcement purposes and for other purposes." Those from a more liberal perspective may question what is meant by "other purposes."

Personal phone conversations and other electronic communications from anywhere in the United States can be tapped and copied to a surveillance site anywhere. Of course this is only supposed to happen when appropriately authorized. The Congress, FBI and law enforcement have made it clear that their intentions for supporting this piece of legislation is to offer a technological "edge" to law enforcement in such arenas as the "war on drugs."

The government has never before had the capability to wiretap anywhere from the country with such minimal effort and ease. It may take nothing more than a keystroke for the implementation of undetectable wiretapping from any of the key players in the large pool of federal, state and local agencies who will have their hands in this.

H.R. 4922 will allow all federal, state, county, city and other "authorized" agents and agencies the ability to monitor, simultaneously, as many as one out of 100 phone lines in some regions of this country. A low estimate would mean that over 74,000 lines at once could be tapped. The bulk of this surveillance will take place in major metropolitan areas "where the majority of both crime and political power is centered." But, metropolitan areas are not the only areas being monitored. The plan allows for three geographic areas, Category I, II and III. Category I areas are metropolitan and have an actual tapping capacity of 1 in 200 with maximum capacity of 1 in 100. Cat-

egory II areas are both urban and dense suburban areas and have an actual capacity of 1 in 400 with a maximum of 1 in 200. Category III includes all remaining areas and allows for a maximum of 1 in 400 taps. Obviously, this plan is not limited to just high crime areas.

Take notice that FBI Director Freeh is on record stating that it would be "nearly impossible" to obtain as many court orders as needed to conduct the extent of wiretapping that will occur once this program is implemented. What exactly does he mean?

When this measure was passed through Congress, it seems likely that a large number of elected representatives who supported it didn't realize the large number of potential misuses. H.R. 4922 was marketed as a tool to assist local, state and federal officials in combating some of the major problems facing our nation. What Senator or Representative would vote against a bill that is supposedly aiding our law enforcement officials in the war on drugs, especially with a major election coming up? Granted, wiretaps are needed in some situations, but the idea of random undetectable wiretappings should frighten Americans.

So what is the outlook?

You may not think that the government would want to tap your phone, after all, you're not the type of person the government is interested in...right? Think again! Consider the fact that you might be someone who is anti-establishment, a political activist or simply not considered mainstream. These may

all be reasons for tapping your phone. Remember, this will not only be used in fighting the war on drugs! Presently, the war on drugs is a major priority for the DEA and FBI. On a more local level, what are the priorities for right-wing politicians?

Imagine having the ability to spy in on the lives of opponents. Throughout history, people in leadership positions have abused power and why should it be different this time?

Or consider this.

Once this program is put to action, what elected representative would dare question or

Granted, wiretaps are needed in some situations, but the idea of random undetectable wiretappings should frighten Americans.

(WIRETAP continued on page 22)

If Only We'd Been Warned Of

Tainted Blood

by Chris Lupton

photos by Joe Solari

What would you consider to be more intimate: sexual intercourse or a blood transfusion? Sex, right? Not necessarily.

When someone receives a blood transfusion, they are infused with the blood of four to six people. One's choice of a sexual partner is a variable in the risk of one's sex life, but a blood transfusion offers little or no choice. A blood recipient has no opportunity to screen potential donors, leaving this most important task to the blood banking system.

Blood and Disease

"The blood supply is as safe as medical technology will allow," says Dr. Mike Pratt, executive vice president of the Central Florida Blood Bank (CFBB).

Though the blood supply in America is safer than it has ever been, "safer" is merely a relative term. There is still room for improvement. Tennis great Arthur Ashe and Elizabeth Glaser, wife of actor Paul Michael Glaser, both died in 1994 after contracting AIDS through tainted blood transfusions received during the 1980's. Today, the odds of getting HIV from a blood transfusion are between 1 in 11,000 and 1 in 59,000; the

risk of contracting hepatitis C, which can cause chronic liver disease, is only 1 in 900.

How does this contaminated blood slip through? Potential donors who carry either HIV or hepatitis are not always deemed unfit to donate through the screening process. Blood banks have reported more than 15,000 mistakes to the Food and Drug Administration in the area of donor screening since 1990 alone. As a result, approximately 1,000 people with HIV and 46,000 people with hepatitis have been erroneously permitted to donate blood each year.

Studies documented in *World Health* have shown that donors who are paid are more likely to have contaminated blood. Donors whose motivation is money instead of altruism are also more likely to provide false information on their medical histories to be allowed to donate. Blood banks are required to label blood as either paid or unpaid donor blood. Some doctors refuse to transfuse blood from paid donors because they fear the possibility of contamination is greater. And with component therapy, several blood recipients could be exposed to contaminated blood.

Whole units of blood are broken down by blood banks into their various components: plasma, red blood cells, platelets, white blood cells and clotting factor. Often, blood recipients do not need whole blood, and are given just one component. For example, a cancer patient recovering from chemotherapy may need more platelets, while a hemophiliac would need more plasma and clotting factor. As a result, the various components of contaminated blood could infect several people.

Once the blood has been donated, it is not always held for an adequate period of time to properly test for possible diseases. HIV tests look for antibodies produced by the body to defend itself against the HIV virus. But the antibodies produced by the presence of HIV do not appear immediately.

There is a "window" of about six weeks for the antibodies to begin to appear, yet many blood banks hold and test their blood for less than 35 days.

"The unfortunate reason [that people are still infected through transfusions] is that people who believe that they are safe and have had no risk are still contracting the disease elsewhere and come in to donate blood and are caught in the window period," said John Adamson, president of the New York Blood

Center, in a television interview.

Even more disturbing are the results of a recent study conducted at the University of Michigan. The findings, published in the *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrom*, show that HIV is up to 1,000 times more contagious in its earliest stages, the period during which it is least likely to be detected. Dr. Pratt stated that CFBB is adding a second, more sensitive HIV test which should close the "window" by about a week.

The Future of Blood Supply

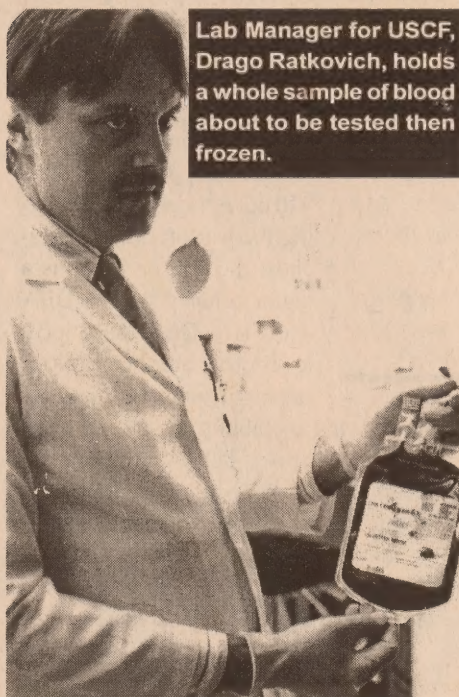
Additional testing of donated blood is one of the most effective ways to improve the quality of the nation's blood supply. As medical technology progresses, more sensitive tests can be used to reduce the amount of contaminated blood which slips into the blood supply. Though the hyper-sensitivity of new tests may detect even the smallest amounts of foreign material in the blood, it is better to exclude the blood rather than risk infecting a patient. The health and safety of the recipient should be the main priority.

Autologous blood donation is an option for individuals to protect themselves from the possibility of receiving tainted blood through a transfusion. Someone can do-

(BLOOD continued on page 22)



Blood is kept in freezer chambers at 120 degrees below zero.



Lab Manager for USCF, Drago Ratkovich, holds a whole sample of blood about to be tested then frozen.

Educating The Masses

by Andrea Stell

"So you say you want a revolution." Well, forget it, we're not ready for a revolution. A revolution would leave most struggling to survive and the rest drowning in their own blood. Most people wouldn't even understand why we were revolting. What people do want is peaceful change. And the change they want differs from person to person. The advantage is with those who truly care about what they believe in. Once you have harnessed the motivation and determination for your cause, the next step, the only true and effective step, is education.

If you can educate the masses with the facts of an issue, an issue where the facts point out a clear need for change, the power is really with the people. The reason that Americans have such little power is because we are often denied the facts, the whole truths of an issue. Without the truth, and nothing but the truth, we are unable to make a realistic assessment of an issue. And generally, the left out pieces are the ones that would allow a real analysis of the issue. For example, the public is told that the new FBI wiretap proposal will help fight the war on drugs, but aren't told that *their* phones could be tapped at any time, not just the drug dealers.

The government, the media, the powerful members of this country realize that we are less than competent when it comes to deciphering the hidden agendas of issues. Americans are known for smiling and nodding their heads at issues, issues that should get them shaking their fists and shaking their heads. So, these people take advantage of that ability, providing us with the facts necessary to get the heads nodding. And why can they get away with it?

Cause we have never asked for anything more. And the few times that we have were short-lived or not powerful enough attempts. So, the real issue is, once we recognize an issue as unfair, unconstitutional or plain-old wrong, what do we do?

Education is the secret. If you can mobilize an entire community, teaching them about an issue that is wrong, the ways it's wrong and how it can be fixed, you become powerful. Your community becomes a force to be reckoned with. The next step is to educate more communities. Soon, you may find that you *do* have a revolution on hand. However, this is a revolution of the mind. This is a revolution that will fight, not with guns and knives, but with newspapers and flyers, television programs and lectures, demonstrations and a fist held high.

Granted, apathy runs rampant. But even apathy can be defeated with education. And, sadly, those who sit dormant, those who smirk and laugh and think you are wasting time, will be trying to catch up when changes are made.

You don't have to be a rebel or an anarchist to fight against the wrong-doings of the government, inhumane organizations or corporations. You just have to be a citizen who gives a damn about the world we live in and the way the people of the world are treated. It's your right!



FRED PERRY

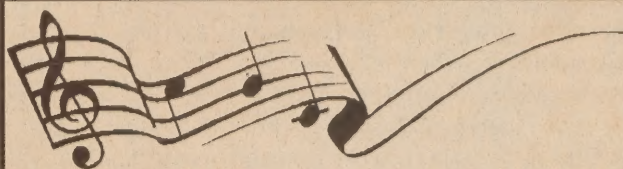
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DRUG-ZONE

This Is A Test Of The Anti-Privacy System

by Joe Gordon

I AM ONE OF THE MOST RELIABLE EMPLOYEES that I know. That's not bragging, vanity, or some cheesy lie to reinforce the forthcoming argument. It's a damned fact. In my five and a half years working for my present company, I have not called in sick in excess of three times. Each time was perfectly justified, and one of those times was two days after my most recent accident.

I'm also very competent. My supervisors often complement me on my working skills, and rely on me to solve a myriad of problems. I have never been reprimanded or held accountable for any mishaps that have occurred while I've been working.

Know what? I'm also a marijuana user.

Certainly this gargantuan threat to the welfare of the free world should warrant my immediate dismissal. I mean, after all, I might not have injured my leg had I not been so damned *stoned* while I was working.

For the sarcasm-impaired: That was sarcasm. Neat, isn't it? In reality, my semi-frequent use of marijuana would have absolutely nothing to do with the freak movement I made which caused my accident while I was on the clock. The two variables are completely exclusive.

They're testing me anyway, the fascist scum. I am to take a piss test soon which, if failed, could cost me my job. My job of five and a half years that has been virtually free of incident. Fair? You bet not.

Drug testing is wholly unreasonable. A worker should be evaluated by his or her job performance, and *nothing else*. The same should go for politics. In fact—I *want* a president who smokes pot and dodges the draft! An article in March 1990's *Scientific American* indicated that statistically, workers who tested positive for marijuana exhibited far less absenteeism than non-users (check out my record.) They were fired from previous jobs (for causes other than drug use) less often than non-users (I've had the same job for five and a half years, the only job I've ever had.) These workers had a higher than average rate of promotion (I'm a supervisor myself.) The workers cost less in health insurance benefits (I'm part-time, but if I were full time, I wouldn't have needed to file a claim.) I'm not saying that marijuana makes one a better worker, but it certainly doesn't make somebody a *worse* one.

I strongly believe that people should be able to do whatever they wish to their body, as long as they four-wall it. I can think of nothing in my life which is affected by my marijuana use. If it ever does come to that, I will quit. No problem.

Drug testing is, quite simply, another way for business and government to get PR for their anti-drug supporters. It isn't economical. Businesses spend \$1.2 billion a year for drug testing, money

that could have been spent on philanthropic projects for local communities. The same goes for the government's anti-drug war. Government spends much more than businesses for anti-drug purposes, which could have been used toward combating the specters of homelessness or *gasp* paying off the *freaking national debt!*

Drug testing is *self-incrimination*! Self-incriminating evidence doesn't always have to come from one's own mouth. It can also come from the bladder. Certainly the constitution doesn't apply to private companies. However, the companies doing the testing have very little information about drug use and how it affects job performance. They've seen *Reefer Madness* and *Marijuana: The Devil's Weed* to make their decisions about drug testing.

Soon, parents everywhere will be testing their children for drugs. There are already chemicals which can detect the presence of marijuana on furniture and clothes! **For the sake of all things holy and otherwise, what kind of Big Brother, non-trusting, evil, horrid, privacy-invading, Bible-thumping, brave new world are we turning into?**

I'm not even going to get into how drug testing can sometimes be unreliable, but I will tell you how to stick a dick in this outlandish institution.

Dilute your urine before the test. Drink at least eight glasses of water every day before the test, and two quarts on test day. Careful: The lab may reject your sample because of clear urine. Eat a lot of red meat or take a lot of vitamin B-2 or B-12. This will increase your urine's creatinine level and color your urine yellow.

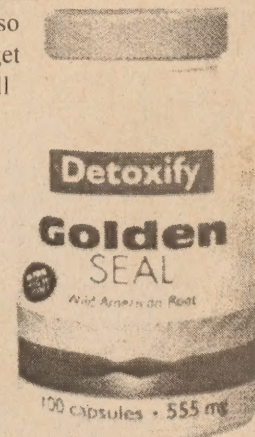
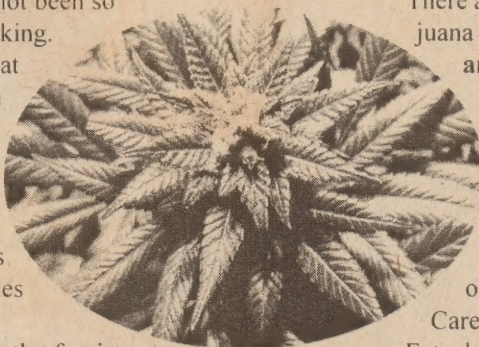
Naturally Klean Herbal Tea (c) claims to clear any drug metabolites from your system for a few hours after ingestion. It can be acquired at most health stores.

Ingest diuretics, which cause frequent urination. Diuretics are coffee, cranberry juice, beer, iced tea, herbal tea, Pepsi, and Goldenseal (a plant, also acquired at health stores. Be sure to get the root; not the herb. Be sure not to tell the health store clerk that you are attempting to pass a drug test, because they may not sell the item to you.)

Do not give the first urine of the day as a sample. It's the dirtiest. Also, don't submit the beginning or end of the urine stream. Piss in the toilet, go in the cup, and finish in the toilet. Be sure to give 60 cc's.

Good luck!! Stick it to those fascist muthas!

Editor's Note: The writer and IMPACT press do not condone drug use on the job. We also feel that the use of some other drugs, while used off-the-job, could cause poor work performance or other side effects. What we are trying to say is, don't smoke crack, for god's sake, just don't!



Es Ee Ex

by Sean "Just The Facts" Helton

I was reading a magazine the other day -- *Getting Fit* if you must know -- and I happened upon some very interesting information. Very interesting indeed. Men, huddle up. Sick of women calling you a sex-crazed, perverted freak-job? Well, that probably won't change. Sorry. However, when they do so, now you can combat them with a response other than, "Yeah? Well...you're emotional and stuff!" You see, recent research has shown that, and I quote, "Whenever we are sexually aroused, make love, move in a sexual manner, enjoy a sexual fantasy or linger over the memory of a sexual encounter, a biochemical fountain of youth 'mists' through our bodies." This from **Paul Pearsall, Ph.D.** Ha! Ha and double Ha! Mr. Pearsall further explains that, "Neurotransmitters and hormones released during sex can boost immunity and promote healing." There's this gland in the brain -- the pineal gland -- and it secretes a hormone called melatonin. Now melatonin does a few things, among which are to retard aging, strengthen immunity and reduce the risk of cancer. Even the smokers win!

Dr. Pearsall also states that, "Life isn't linear; it's cyclical," but I don't know what the hell that means so forget it. Back to the sex stuff... Guys, jump up and down, scream wildly, do anything to celebrate; we've got them on the ropes! This is the best news to come out of science since those nerds told us a glass of wine a day is beneficial. Alcohol AND sex have now been proven to help your health. This is fantastic! Then you throw in the part about smoking...and voilà! We're on the threshold of a society full of cancerous, drunken nymphomaniacs. You bet your sweet ass we're gonna party like it's 1999!

Gentlemen, do you see what this means? Have you gathered the gist of this situation? This opens a whole new world to us. Women really have no excuse, aside from utter physical repulsiveness, not to sleep with us. We have the scientific proof to back it. We pick-up an extra year just THINKING about doing the deed. And they told us we'd go blind! Pish-posh. As the good doctor advises, "Find a couple of times a day to think about sex, fantasize or mentally replay a particular encounter." While you women are worried about which pumps to wear with which belt, we men are getting healthier just sittin' back in the recliner with the remote in one hand and our best friend in the other.

This will also revolutionize the dating world. I expect dating scenes nationwide to change this weekend even. It really isn't up to the women anymore. Now WE have control. Don't want to dance with us? Don't want to give us your number? Fine. You've just

shaved a year off your life. We men don't have to worry about coming up with snazzy pick-up lines anymore. Forget about approaching women with those golden oldies: "Come here often? What's your sign? Can I buy you a drink?" Or, my personal favorite: "Uncle Phil! What the hell are you doing in a dress?!!!" From now on you can just saunter over to any hot little number and ask, "Hey baby, wanna live past 65.2? I can help you get there." Inform her of the recent SCIENTIFIC findings about how sex prolongs life and health. And, if she's a smoker, mention the cancer bit. She'll be buying you drinks in no time.

Ladies, I'm sorry to have done this, but it's time to relinquish the throne. You've had the upper-hand for too long, and now it's our turn. The men are up to bat and it's going to be a very LOOOONG inning. However, this isn't a total loss for the women. Somehow, you've managed to win in a losing situation...again. You now have a justifiable reason to go shopping and spend lots of money. With this newfound knowledge the battle for Mr. Right will be more vicious than ever. There will be even more fierce competition, so you'd better look your best. I'll give you all a little tip: Be sure you buy lots of tight, clingy stuff. We love tight, clingy stuff. And while you're at it, get a new hairdo and manicure. Oooh, and buy some of

that Victoria's Secret "Rapture" perfume: the stuff should be illegal.

I know this is all very hard to swallow for both sexes. On the one hand, I'm sure the rest of you men are as surprised as I. If someone would have told me this I would have looked at them with a tearful eye and asked, "You're on crack, aren't you?" It's all too good to be true, yet it is. We've finally won. All the years, decades and centuries of trying to win the hand of our favorite girl, have finally paid off. As the French say, "The war...she is ours."

And for the ladies, what a huge wrench science has thrown into the monster machine of feminism. Now you'll know how it feels when the agonizing blow of desperation hits about 15 minutes after the bartender yells "Last Call." And maybe you'll understand how we can reason our way out of waking up next to someone we don't even remember. Not that it's ever happened to me: I'm just guessing. Regardless of how you deal with this horrid turn of events, I know you'll accept defeat with grace and style and all the things that make you truly the fairer sex; in much the same way we men have for the past gazillion years, minus the grace and style thing.

Just remember, as Dr. Pearsall so eloquently put it, "Sexual fitness is so intrinsic to our general health that any doctor who ignores it practices bad medicine, and any person who forgets it puts her entire well-being at risk." Thank you and good night Dr. Pearsall, wherever you are.

Send your thoughts to Sean1215@aol.com



Ladies, I'm sorry to have done this, but it's time to relinquish the throne. You've had the upper-hand for too long, and now it's our turn.



Custody Criminals

by Tyler Let

photo illustration by Marty Kelley

Are child abuse claims being faked to help custody cases be won? Does the state do anything to prevent this from happening?

ONE OF THE MOST ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES in our justice system is being threatened - presumed innocence, the principle that the accused is assumed to be innocent until proven guilty.

Every time a constitutional pillar is leaned upon - be it through religious and intrusive legislation, through the legislation of morals, or for simple political gain - the robbers of Constitutional rights explain their reasoning through the use of a popular phrase: "for the children".

In cases of alleged child abuse or domestic violence, children are not the source of rhetoric, they are the actual pivot point upon which selfish parents win criminal and civil court cases by switching the burden of proof to the accused.

Here's how the snowballing process begins:

- A spouse alleges abuse by notifying HRS or a law enforcement branch.
- That spouse files an affidavit with their county court alleging abuse.
- The accused spouse is removed from the home with no prior warning or defense.
- Fifteen days later, a civil judge considers the continuation of the affidavit.

- At the same time, HRS begins a criminal investigation to determine whether to refer the case to the State Attorney.
- If the accused spouse admits to abuse, he is taken from the home for 1 year. If he contests, he waits another 15 days for a trial.
- Divorce proceedings are combined with abuse hearings. A judge awards custody of children to the parent who has no record of even alleged abuse.

Florida Statute 741 states broadly says that anyone can fill out an affidavit alleging domestic violence - a term defined in the statutes as actual or threatened abuse. And indeed, the definition allows many people to escape abusive situations that may be life threatening. Police often advise any reporters of abuse to seek an injunction. The aim - remove the alleged abuser from the home. But before anyone showers the process with praise, the balance of justice must be considered.

With the gravity of the affidavit, however, comes a consequence that is supposed to help prevent abuse of the law. If someone claims false information in an affidavit, they are supposed to be prosecuted for perjury.

Abuses have occurred because perjury cases aren't initiated or followed through with.

"It's just an accusation," said Seminole County Judge Tom Freeman, who presides over divorce proceedings daily. "It carries with it a stigma in the community forever and ever," he said of the injunction affidavit.

After receiving such an affidavit, a judge reviews the cases *without testimony* (read: without defense by the accused), and decides whether to order an injunction (meaning an order not to do something) that, in domestic situations, means the accused party is removed from the home without prior notification.

He or she isn't granted a trial for 15 days.

"There's got to be violence involved for me to issue an injunction," said Freeman, who added that he has heard requests for injunctions based on verbal threats made over the phone. Freeman said that, for him to issue an injunction, the threat of violence has to be practical. The threatener has to exhibit an ability to carry out the threat. Other than this discretion, a Florida Civil Court judge's hands are tied by the sworn affidavit which he has to assume is the truth.

In addition to the safety of the victim,

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consider, as an elected official, a judge isn't likely to ignore an allegation of child abuse, *especially if the report turns out to be accurate*, that judge would be left swinging from a political noose. So the judge is inclined to grant an injunction in the early stage of this civil court proceeding. *With the signing of a piece of paper, someone merely accused of abuse has, without any due process, been ousted from his or her home.*

But as Freeman explained, the cases often take care of themselves. "In about 65-70 percent of the cases, the wife never shows up in court fifteen days later," he said. So the case is dropped. He added that even when showing up, some spouses drop the charges or change their mind about the alleged abuse. Freeman suggested some charges are merely fodder for future court battles.

Even when charges of abuse are dropped, the stigma remains - not only in the eyes of the community, but in subsequent divorce proceedings.

In the interest of fairness, consider that a 15-day expulsion from one's own home is part of the due process, the argument being that the accused receives a hearing after that time, if the accusing party appears to continue the case. One has to question whether the initial hearing is substantive. In the first hearing the accused can "consent to continuation," basically admit guilt and allow themselves to be ousted from their house for one year, or he or she can object to the allegation, automatically causing another 15 day waiting period for another hearing. Now someone accused of a crime, never convicted, never given a chance to argue his or her case, is out his or her home for more than a month.

Stop right there, and the flaws in the process are frightening. But in many of these cases, Injunction hearings are combined with divorce proceedings under Florida law, meaning the same judge that heard the allegations of abuse hears the divorce case. The intent in combining the civil cases is to save time and court costs, while allowing the same judge who considered the injunction to judge the divorce. But in actuality, the judge is more motivated to base the divorce ruling on the *status quo*, meaning the situation prior

to the divorce. If one parent was kicked out of the house on an injunction, and the judge has no overwhelming evidence to prove the affidavit is false, he is inclined to award custody and parental rights to the accusing parent.

The snowball begins.

In addition to the safety of the victim, consider, as an elected official, a judge isn't likely to ignore an allegation of child abuse, *especially if the report turns out to be accurate*, that judge would be left swinging from a political noose. So the judge is inclined to grant an injunction in the early stage of this civil court proceeding. *With the signing of a piece of paper, someone merely accused of abuse has, without any due process, been ousted from his or*

Not unlike Joseph McCarthy's public and false branding of what he thought were communists in this country, an accuser - or for that matter, an angry spouse - has managed to expel a spouse from his or her own house, acquire a divorce, win custody of the children, and stigmatize the spouse with the brand of abuser. All of this on a mere accusation.

"A lot of lawyers are telling clients to do that," said Freeman, as he cited a request for an injunction where a woman wrote, in her affidavit, that she was advised by her lawyer to file the injunction when divorce proceedings began. The flaw in the domestic violence injunction law literally allows the burden of proof to be shifted to the accused, he said. "I don't have any doubt that that happens," said Michael Gray, an attorney in Seminole County, Florida. "I don't advise them to do it to assist in a custody issue. If I hear that my client has been a victim of abuse, then I advise them to seek the injunction," he said. "It's a valuable tool that, unfortunately, gets misused."

Enter the Criminal factor.

As is the case with most alleged abuse situations, law enforcement has set foot somewhere in the situation. An abuse accusation generally begins with law enforcement, according to Stewart Doyle, public information officer for Florida's Health and Rehabilitative Services. From that point, HRS determines, in an investigation, whether to press a criminal case.

This is all at the same time a civil judge is considering the injunction and possibly beginning divorce proceedings. It's possible that a civil judge may have completed the

divorce case before any criminal wrongdoing has been proven.

The Florida State Attorney's office handles all incidents of alleged child abuse through its Victim Services Division, and cases of domestic violence through Domestic Violence Intake. "There's always going to be abuses of the law," said Victim Witness Coordinator Linda Khun, "It certainly has happened. We have the obligation of reviewing cases to see if a crime is there."

Some claims are found to be false by the State Attorney's office. That's the purpose of the State Attorney's intake procedure. As Judge Freeman stated, even he finds false claims in sworn affidavits - that's where perjury comes into play. Freeman's option is to refer that perjury offense to the State Attorney's office, who can then choose whether or not to prosecute the spouse who stigmatized another with an abuse accusation. "The State Attorney wouldn't do that," said Freeman. According to Judge Freeman and Michael Gray, the State Attorney's office in Florida has a history of not prosecuting *any* of the false abuse allegations for perjury.

Freeman and Gray suggested that this exercise by the State Attorney would create a deterrent for spouses causing permanent social and legal damage by falsely alleging child abuse.

Linda Khun said that the State Attorney's office processes perjury cases in this particular type of situation "very infrequently," although she said she didn't have any specific information. Khun referred the query to Jeanne Gold, of the Domestic Violence Intake division. As to whether any of the 1,300 injunctions issued this year (a number she provided) had been prosecuted for perjury, Gold said she didn't know. "I've only been in this position for four months," she said. "I deal with the 20 or 30 percent [of the injunctions] that are keeping people alive." As to whether any of the other 70 or 80 percent were ever found to be false, or prosecuted for perjury, Gold said, "I can't remember." Eventually, she said she had not processed any perjury cases.

"It really has to start with a complaint," Gold said, deferring to the defendant, or the

(ABUSE, continued on page 22)

LISTEN TO THIS!



O-Matic
Dog Years
Grass Records

Aggressive. This is just pure-breed rock and roll. There is an amped-up Sonic Youth feel going on (the Kim Gordon-ish vocals on the tracks sung by guitar/vocalist Michelle Bodin). The music is uptempo with some catchy hooks, but there's a whole lot more driving going on than cruise control. This release is not for the pop-inclined. This is not pop. This is rock! Toss together a four-piece from Dayton, a history with Kim Deal and the band Guided By Voices, an ex-Brainiac member, debut CD release, intense rock and roll, and you've got O-Matic. Now blend and bake for two hours. Now you've gotta get *Dog Years*! It's seventeen tracks of goodness that you'll be thanking me for! (Grass Records, 72 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10016)

Bouncing Souls
Maniacal Laughter
BYO Records



Here we go! This is their second album, and this is so great. Ten times better than their first, the Souls have found their sound and are now more than just a one-dimensional punk rock band. This album combines up-tempo beats with driving melodies and throws in a bit of the old school flava for fun. Fulla twelve tracks of punk rock, this is a great album. There is not a single song on here that isn't good. Of course, there are the stand-out tracks like "Lamar Vannoy" - a punk rock anthem of teen angst - and "Quick Check Girl" - a fun, put emotional story of love found and lost. This four-piece has captured what makes punk rock so great, and why MTV's punk ain't shit! Pick this up and you will be a very happy kitty. (BYO Records, PO Box 67A64, Los Angeles, CA 90067)

Clarissa
Silver
Mammoth

Clarissa delivers nothing new with their first release, *Silver*. But that's not such a bad thing. Instead of haphazardly trying to break new ground, this Chapel Hill three-piece deliver solid 70's influenced rock 'n' roll. However, they (thankfully) lack the pop edge that producer Don Gehem brought to former projects, Hootie and the Blowfish and R.E.M. All in all, *Silver* is a solid, straightforward debut. (Mammoth Records, 594 Broadway, Suite 406, NY, NY 10012)

The Elevator Drops
Lennon's Dead EP
Time Bomb Recordings

I must be missing what it is that is so great about this band. The press kit is better than the record. They sound like they are making fun of Indie music in the press kit, but the 7" is simply rehashed Beatle-esque music. Now, I realize that that might be part of the joke. I just don't get it. Unfortunately, I really don't care for the 7" at all. What confuses me is that this label, in the past, has released some really cool punk rock stuff. This seems real out of character. Maybe there is more to this, and a full-length release will help me to see it. But right now, this does very little for me. Maybe it's for you instead. (Time Bomb Recordings, 219 Broadway #519, Laguna Beach, CA 92651)



Conglomerate
Armaghetho
Earth Music/Cargo Records

Take a little funk, punk, jazz, R & B, rock, soul and gospel, mix well - and you have the thick grooves of Conglomerate. Front man, Steve Harris, along with three very diverse musicians, fuse these sounds together in an impeccable fashion. The San Diego based group just released their new album, *Armaghetho*. Unlike many bands of today, Conglomerate's songs thrive on the morals and meanings of everyday life in the ghetto, or any where for that matter. Harris' voice booms Kravitz mixed with Jeff Buckley-like soul. A good choice for an eclectic crowd. (Cargo Records, 4901-906 Morena Blvd., San Diego, CA 92117-3432)

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LISTEN TO THIS!



Fu Manchu
In Search Of...
Mammoth Records

I suppose that the Wavy Gravy looking text on the album cover should have told me that these guys have a Super Sounds of the 70's Style. This, however, is a good thing. If you can possibly imagine all the hairy guys from The Allman Brothers producing offspring with all the hairy guys from Black Sabbath, you have a pretty vivid imagination and a pretty vivid idea of what these guys sound like. It's very heavy music which will have you sporting bell bottoms in no time. They don't sound like they're trying to rip off these 70's monsters of rock, but the influence is definitely there. It's really a great disc with heavy, simple riffs that'll take you back to the days of old. Grab it now. (Mammoth Records, 594 Broadway, Suite 406, NY, NY 10012)

Carlos
Amy Armageddon
Cargo/Headhunter Records

Let's not say that they're from the East Bay, cause then we won't feel like we've already grouped them with bands like *Green Day* and *Rancid*. Cause *Carlos* is much more. These guys know how to play. And they have tempo changes that can challenge your ears, not just put them to sleep. They play a style that is not melodic punk rock, but it's not noise either. It's sorta a cross between the late-great WAX and a Smashing Pumpkins/Beatles blend. With Doug, Allan and Rich tearin' in up, this album is an alternative gem, but probably too D.I.Y. for the radio to buy into. At least, if it isn't the freshest newest sound out there, they do it by their own rules. It's, all around, a pretty damn good album. (Cargo Records, 4901-906 Morena Blvd., San Diego, CA 92117-3432)

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McRackins
In On The Volk!
Shredder Records

Meet the busiest punks North of the border—the McRackins!! Over the last 15 months these kids have released 100 songs on 16 labels in 7 countries. This latest release, *In on the Volk!* is full o' bouncy, happy, new school punk. Sure, there's not too much musical talent on this disc, but you've gotta give the boys, or in this case the eggs and the dog, points for heart. If you're looking for some light punk that'll make you shake your booty, give *In on the Volk!* a spin. (Shredder Records, 75 Plum Tree Lane #3, San Rafael, CA 94901)



Mem Shannon
A Cab Driver's Blues
Hannibal Records/Rycodisk

It's a lazy Sunday morning, your coffee sending swirls of steam into the air, Mem Shannon belting out the blues in the background. This disc, the work of a New Orleans bluesman, is some of the better blues to hit the market in a long time, full of soul, funk, and smooth licks. With snippets of real conversations he recorded in his cab, Mem gives you insight into why he sings the blues. In his song "If This Ain't the Blues" Mem let's us hear some of his laments: My best huntin' dog died last week/I tried to feed him, but he still dead/I got a permanent layoff from my job/Boss said it's just as well, you fired anyway. Infused with humor and a B.B. King meets the Zydeco Man sound, this is a blues album that takes you to the root of the blues in 1996. (Rycodisk, Shetland Park, 27 Congress Street, Salem, MA 01970)

Napalm Death
Diatribes
Earache Records

These guys are mad. Really mad. But they can play. Really play. Their music is like auditory aggression - aggression directed at the evils of society. Since their first release, 13 years ago, Napalm Death has fine tuned their sound, losing a bit of the turbo-style beats they used to play and incorporating a more melodic, almost groovy beat into their sound. They are definitely on the fringe of extreme noise, sometimes sounding like the disc is skipping, but there are some great riffs on the disc which make it worth checking out. Diatribes, Placate, Sedate, Eradicate, and My Own Worst Enemy are three power-packed tunes which exemplify the ease with which Napalm Death can balance on the line between noise and thrash metal at its finest. Check it out. (Earache Records, 295 Lafayette St., Suite 915, NY, NY 10012)



Holiday Flyer
Try Not To Worry
Silver Girl Records

There is, ever-so-often, that band that captures beauty and is able to sustain it. Holiday Flyer is exquisite beauty, consistently, throughout their album, *Try Not To Worry*. If there is such a thing as a masterpiece in music, this album has attained such a title. Of course, a category for which they should reign supreme is a necessity. That category is harmonious, semi-acoustic music. They have similarities to bands such as Mary Lou Lord and Mazzy Star, but they are a band that needs no comparisons. Out of northern California, the dueling, male/female vocals, the soft, yet powerful cello, the all together tightness of their music (they are a three piece) is enough to sell any music lover on this band. There are no words to describe the quality of this release other than god-like. (Silver Girl Records, PO Box 161024, San Diego, CA 92176)

LISTEN TO THIS!



Pitchblende
GVGAX
Headhunter/Cargo

Pitchblende
GVGAX
Headhunter/Cargo

Guitarist Treiops Treyfid once described Pitchblende's sound as "in-ya-face geek rock." But on Pitchblende's third album, "*GVGAX*," it's not so much "in-ya-face" as it is around your head. Guitars veer in and out of the mix, and rhythms stop and start without warning. The band has a dissonant edge in the tradition of Sonic Youth, yet there is a melodic undercurrent that prevents one from dismissing Pitchblende as mere noise. Their more melodic side is most evident on tracks like "Burning Man" and "Crumbs of Affection." Somewhat wandering at times, "*GVGAX*" is a solid album that grows on you with repeated listens. (Cargo Records, 4901-906 Morena Blvd., San Diego, CA 92117-3432)



NOFX
Heavy Petting Zoo
Epitaph

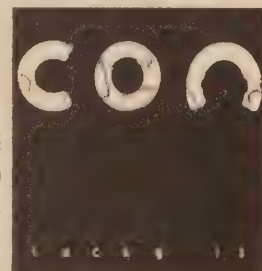
So they've released a zillion albums and some how, with each new one, they provide our ears a new treat. Heavy Petting Zoo is a wonderful blend of NOFX-style punk rock. Searing guitar solos and silly lyrics, coupled with the hardcore tracks and semi-political thoughts. Once again, NOFX has provided a well-rounded punk rock gem. The band has now emphatically stated that it wants nothing to do with corporate music and that MTV can stop bothering them about a video (as taken from their liner notes). Time will only tell where the fame of a growing punk rock band will take them. Thirteen tracks of melodic goodness! (Epitaph Records, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026)



Shirk Circus
March
Bar None Records

Pop goes the punk band. And, hey, *it isn't bad at all*. Hailing from the New Jersey hardcore scene (and sleeting too,) Shirk Circus has severely mellowed out to release *March*, a collection of very nice-sounding pop songs. I use the word nice sparingly, because it is a weak word. The music certainly doesn't have the bite of in-ya-face, cat-boinkin' punk rock, but I could really get into it. Their melodies and singing are moderately uplifting. Moderately...yes... I'd compare this album experience to buying a really amazing shirt that you've been looking for a long time, putting it on the next day, and finding out that it's a large instead of an extra large. You still have the rad shirt, and all your friends envy you, but it hugs your skin a bit too tightly and then everyone can see that your nipples are hard. That's a downer. Boy, can you say tangent? Yowch! Great album. But as Ben Weasel said about Screeching Weasel's *Wiggle*, "It just doesn't pick you up and shake the piss outta' ya like it should." Maybe I'm just the kind of guy that prefers to be urine-free in my music appreciation. (Bar None Records, PO Box 1704, Hoboken, NJ 07030)

Con
Lucky 13
Object Recordings



These guys suck and swallow. They want to be Nine Inch Nails. Why? I don't know. Typical techno-dance-noise. Don't waste your cash. (Object Recordings, PO Box 53147, Washington, D.C., 20009)

Possum Dixon's latest release is really a pretty upbeat piece of work. Their music is typical rock and roll with a slightly discordant sound which makes it interesting to listen to. They have a sort of classic rock feel which is nicely juxtaposed against a tight production sound. This is the kind of CD that you want to have playing at your next party so your guests will walk in the door and immediately start shaking their booties. "Party Tonight" and "Skid Marks" are especially sweet tracks with a smooth beat which makes you happy. If you enjoy bouncing rock and roll (and who doesn't?) you'll dig this disc.

Swales
What's His Name
Bar None Records

Grab a thesaurus, find the word 'bland', and read along with me. "Uninteresting, unexciting, dull, *slang* blah." *What's His Name* is bland, inoffensive college rock. It's not a bad album: the guitars jangle cleanly and the lyrics are occasionally witty, but the songs are quickly forgotten. Swales add nothing new or interesting to a college rock genre that's been played into the ground, and done better than this. (Bar None Records, PO Box 1714, Hoboken, NJ 07030)

LISTEN TO THIS



Frank Zappa

The Lost Episodes

Rykodisc



The Wrens

Seracucus

Grass Records



Bandit Queen

Hormone Hotel

Mammoth Records

Just when you thought you'd heard it all, Rykodisc shoves some brand-spankin', never before released Zappa on us. For this, we love them. This disc delves into the inner workings of the minds of Kenny and Ronny of "Let's Make the Water Turn Black" fame, takes us to a performance where FZ shared the stage with Louie Armstrong, and gives us snippets of life as viewed through the genius eyes of one of our country's most prolific and talented composers. Spanning 4 decades, this is the perfect disc for the serious Zappa freak or the first time listener. Complete with cover art by Gabor Csupo (you know, the guy who does The Rugrats and Duckman...) and a thick book of information about each track on the disc, this is a must buy. (Rykodisc, Shetland Park, 27 Congress Street, Salem, MA 01970)

Frank Zappa

Does Humor Belong in Music?

Rykodisc

Listen to Frank as he and Dweezil mangle their guitars on this collection of live cuts recorded during his 1984 world tour. This disc clearly shows the technical prowess of Zappa and his entire band. Including the tracks, "Tinsel-Town Rebellion" (Frank's delightfully evil send up of the plastic people in the music biz...), "Penguin in Bondage", "Cock-Sucker's Ball" (dedicated to all the Republicans in the audience...), and "Let's Move to Cleveland", a nearly 17 minute musical masterwork. This 100% live compilation of concert high-points will make you smile. If you don't buy it, you'll spend the rest of your life wishing you had. (Rykodisc, Shetland Park, 27 Congress Street, Salem, MA 01970)

This is a winner. Pop with the indie-edge. It is brilliant harmonies and melodies combined with the chaos of sometimes quirky guitar work. It is a release that will grow like fungus on your brain...it will stick with you for days. And this is good fungus. This is a follow-up to their first Grass release, *Silver*, and is over fifty minutes of raw rock. The music sometimes hinges on a Beatlesque sound, but never becomes unoriginal. The four-piece is out of New Jersey and has to be one of the best new bands out of that state. And to top it all off, the lyrics are substantial and not your typical boring, recycled half-assed poetry. This is the goods! (Grass Records, 72 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10016)

Bandit Queen, the trio from the UK, released their debut album, *Hormone Hotel*, in January. The album offers the ambiguities and duality's of love, from a female perspective, intertwined with strong, moody harmonies and well structured, melodies. Tracy Godding (vocalist/guitarist) pours every ounce of emotion into her lyrics which should not be mistaken for the male bashing or feminist angst. She writes from the heart about her own love experiences. When listening to *Hormone Hotel*, one might hear the influences of Belly, Elastica, The Breeders, and even Nirvana, making it a very interesting piece of work. Be prepared to hear more from and about Bandit Queen in the near future. (Mammoth Records, 594 Broadway, Suite 406, NY, NY 10012)

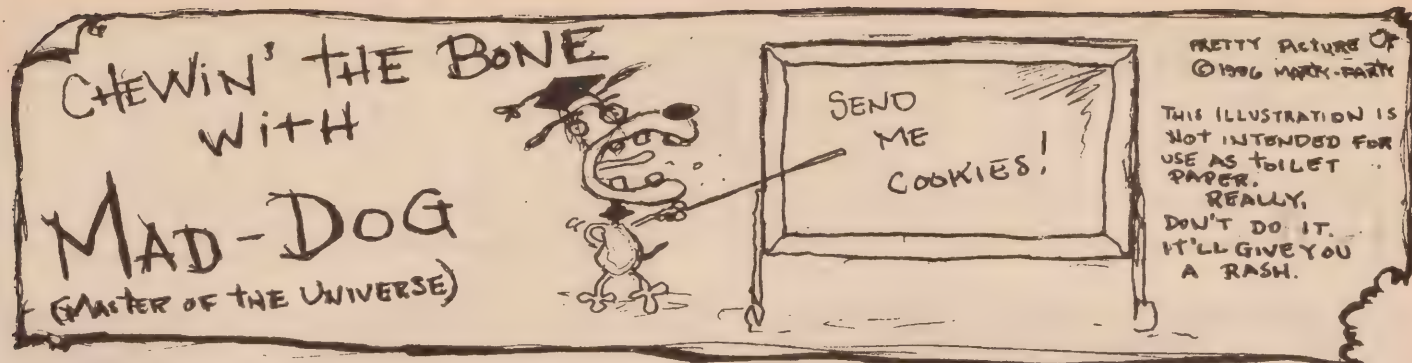
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Dearest Mad Dog,

The other night when making spaghetti, I had to open a jar of sauce. And to open it, I hit the lid of the jar on something hard. Then I asked my boyfriend, why does that work? He replied, "you'll have to ask a physics major". I said I'll ask Mad Dog, he's the Dog with the answers, he should know. So why is it that when you have a jar of sauce, if you hit the lid with something hard, the jar will magically open for you?

Sara F.

Sara, my dear:

I must first commend you on your unusually creative application of quotation marks and punctuation in your question. That's a very unique style you have forged for yourself. I must also congratulate you on your decision to skip the physics major and head right for the top Dog who does, as you said, have all the answers.

Before I begin, I also wish to stress that the concepts we will discuss herein can be applied to all species of jarred food products, not just spaghetti sauce.

There are three theories which can be applied to the magical opening of sealed foodstuffs by forcefully whacking them:

Theory #1 - You were overly exuberant in your whacking and shattered the jar. This usually opens a jar of anything, but makes the sauce (or whatever you're opening) unpleasantly crunchy by filling it with shards of broken glass. This

method is not endorsed by the Dog.

Theory #2 - When the jar was filled at the jar-filling place, some sauce (or peanut butter, or processed artificial Cheez-Food product) got on the rim of the jar and was sealed under the lid. When this stuff dried, it functioned as an adhesive, keeping the lid firmly on the jar despite your most adamant attempts at removal. When you "hit the edge of the lid hard" you cracked this spaghetti sauce mortar (do you feel powerful now?), thus freeing your food and allowing your meal to proceed as scheduled.

Theory #3 - As exciting as these previous theories have been, Sara, my sweet, I must tell you that this third and final theory is the one which I believe to be the true and accurate description of just what happens when you strike your sauce.

Most commercially prepared foods are vacuum packed. Some of them even have nifty little buttons on top of the jars which show you when the seal has been broken. Foods are vacuum packed to preserve the freshness of

the food (or food-like substance, such as Cheez-Whiz) therein. A vacuum, according to the theories of quantum physics, is a space with no matter in it. This is, of course, just a theoretical definition as we know that if we bought a jar of spaghetti sauce with no matter (or sauce) in it, we would be angry consumers, something that large companies do not like.

The working definition of a vacuum (at

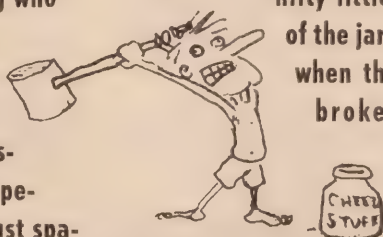
least for food packaging) is a place (in this case, a jar) with pressure far below normal atmospheric pressure so any remaining gasses will not affect processes carried on in the space (or jar). So what does that mean for you? Simply that in the vacuum of your spaghetti sauce jar, spoilage cannot take place.

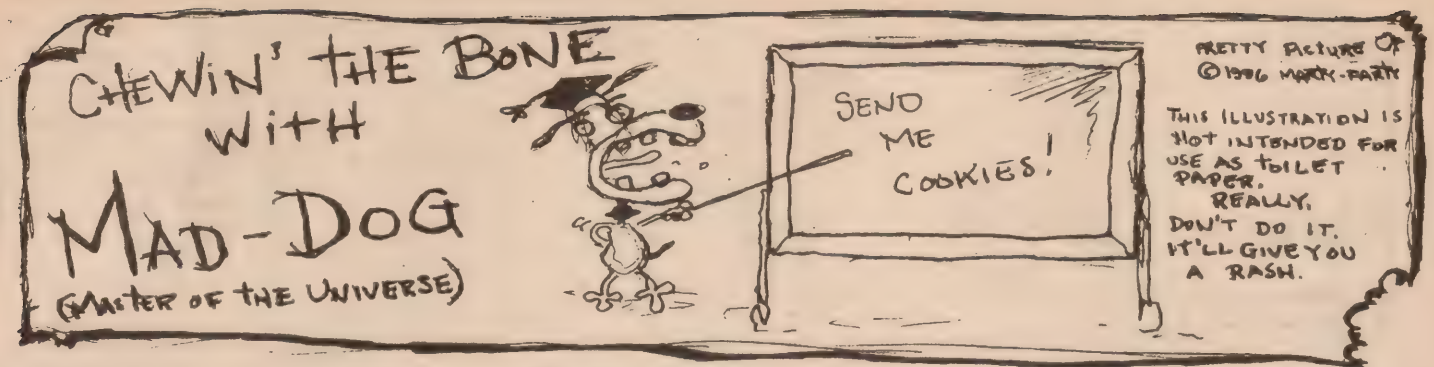
But why does assaulting the lid of the jar with a blunt instrument cause it to open? The lowered air-pressure of the vacuum causes the lid to be held firmly in place (being pressed on by the normal air-pressure surrounding the jar). This is roughly the same principle which allows an airplane to fly. Lowered air-pressure on the top of the wing causes the normal air-pressure below the wing to push it up.

When you hit the jar, you are breaking the seal which maintains this vacuum, equalizing the air-pressure on the inside and the outside of the jar and allowing for easy access to its tasty contents.

For a real-life demonstration of this theory in action, take a playing card and place it over your opened mouth. Suck in hard so the card sticks to your lips (congratulations you just created a vacuum of sorts). Your mouth will represent the jar of sauce, the card playing the part of the lid. Now have a trusted loved one punch you in the mouth very hard. If you do it right, the card should flutter gently to the ground as the vacuum will have been broken and air pressure inside and outside your mouth will have equalized.

So when do I get to come over for dinner?





Mad-Dog:

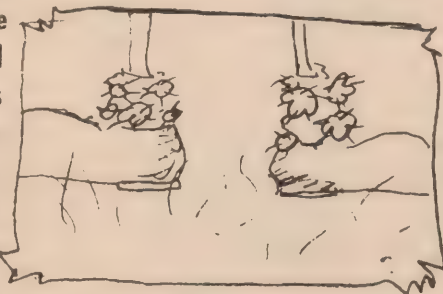
I really miss my Velcro shoes. Where did Velcro come from? What is it's religious significance?

Carl L.

The strain of shoe-lace tying is just too much for your negligible mind? Perhaps you could start with slippers and work your way up...

Velcro is not, as you seem to believe, a gift from the heavens. Buddha never proclaimed its greatness and Vishnu has not made it sacred. I'm sorry, Carl, but most of Velcro's uses seem to dwell on a very secular plain.

As the Swiss engineer Georges de Mestral strolled through the woods one fine afternoon in 1948, his socks were besieged with burrs and prickly things. He did not,



as you or I would have, just brushed them off and grabbed a beer and watched T.V. until our brains atrophied, no!

Georges (who sounds like he's plural, but he's not) was a curious man. A smart man. A clever man. That is why he invented Velcro and you are watching Oprah discuss her bloated ankles or some other equally odious topic.

Georges collected these burrs and examined them under a microscope and was astonished to see that magnified 1000 times, the burrs looked just like Elvis. No, wait...

What he saw was that the burrs had tiny hooked barbs on them which allowed them to grasp tightly to his woolly socks. Of course he had woolly socks, it's cold in Switzerland.

Rather than being satisfied with this finding and going back to the Sven and Ollie show on T.V., Georges decided to make a synthetic copy of this natural wonder to use as a fastener on sneakers and other keen stuff. In 1957 he patented his invention under the name Velcro, a combination of the words "velour" and "crochete" (which is French for 'hook').

A thumbnail sized piece of Velcro has 750 hooks and 12,500 loops for the hooks to catch on to. It took me a long time to count all those, Carl. I hope you appreciate this...

Velcro is endowed with phenomenal shear strength, or, resistance to sideways forces. Less than 5 square inches of certain weaves of Velcro can support 1 ton of weight. If you have this weave of Velcro in use as a fly on your shorts, you're going to have an unpleasant time loosing yourself to go to the bathroom after you drink 17 beers. Velcro of this variety is being considered as a lightweight alternative to rivets in airplane design. This makes me uneasy...

"This is your captain speaking, we should be touching down in about [rrrrrrriiiiiippp!!!!!!!] TWO SECONDS! AAAHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!"

Velcro is also being used to connect

the individual chambers of the Jarvik 7 artificial heart. (The cheaper models use scotch tape).

Thus is Velcro, opiate of the claspses...

Dearest Mad-Dog,

Why is it that many babies are born with blue eyes and then later their eyes turn brown? What's your favorite kind of cookies? I have Girl Scout Thin Mints!

Amy W. (a journalism major)

Amy. Sweetheart...

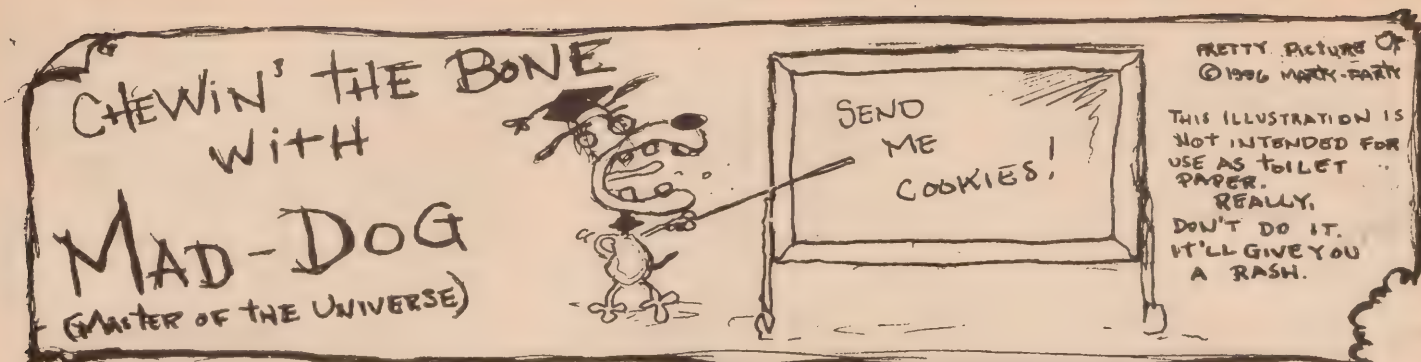
I hope you're not toying with me about those cookies. Girl Scout Thin Mint cookies are more important to my system than oxygen. Let's do cookies, babe...

Also (there's always so much twaddle to take care of before I actually answer the questions) I couldn't help but notice that you are a journalism major with good taste (you do read my column, after all) who, for some reason, does not write for our delightful little paper. Why is this? Do we frighten you with our manliness? We are lots of fun and sometimes Craig, our evil overlord of an editor, even gives us free stuff. Call him. Join us...

Now. Don't ya turn my brown eyes blue - but you can turn my blue eyes brown... Here's why:

All Caucasian babies are born with blue eyes, like it or not. Negroid babies are born with dark brown eyes. That's just the way it is.

The iris (from the Greek word for "rainbow, if you must know) is the col-



ored portion of the eye which surrounds the pupil. Interestingly enough, eyes, no matter what color they appear to be, are colored by only one pigment: melanin (Greek for "who cares?"). The concentrations of melanin within the iris determine the color of the eye.

Eyes which appear blue have a lesser concentration of melanin than eyes which appear brown. Please notice that I'm saying that eyes *appear* to be colored. They are not actually "colored" blue or brown or whatever. Here's the deal:



With a lesser concentration of melanin, short blue light waves are reflected and scattered off non-pigmented particles within the iris. Thus, the iris appears blue.

As concentrations of melanin increase, more short blue rays are absorbed into the pigmented particles within the eye and more of the longer light rays are reflected, giving the appearance of brown eyes.

Easy, no? But this still does not answer your question (I can taste those cookies now...).

When Caucasian babies are born, the melanin is deep within the tissue of the iris. Within the first few months of life, depending on the hereditary traits involved (this is another question for another day), this melanin may move toward the surface of the iris, changing the blue eyes to a darker color.

All eye colors, from the palest gray to

the deepest brown result from the concentrations of melanin within the iris. Albinos, as a corollary note of dubious interest, have very little (if any) melanin in their systems. As a result, their eyes appear to be pink. This is because the lack of melanin in the iris allows light to pass into the eye. The pink coloration is actually a reflection of blood vessels within the eye.

Cookies now?

Mad-Dog:

I'm going far, far away over spring break and I'm afraid of flying. Is it possible for one of those airplane emergency exits to be opened accidentally, thus sucking us out into the stratosphere? Help.

Mucho Macho Marvin

Yeah. You sound very macho, Marvin.

First, I would like to point out to you that, despite whatever you are thinking about daytime TV, nothing sucks. By that, I mean of course, that according to the laws of physics, it is impossible for anything to suck. Things blow.

Allow me to illustrate lest you allow your childish snickering to cloud your perception. Suppose you were on a jet, heading to the International Bikini Chili Cook-Off, or wherever you kids are going for spring break now-a-days. The plane is pressurized to about 7 PSI. At about 35,000 feet, the air pressure outside the plane

is somewhere around 3.5 PSI. The pressure inside the plane is far greater than the pressure outside the plane.

We will now, for the purposes of illustration and thirst-quenching, liken your plane to a can of beer which has been shaken violently. The pressure inside the can is now far greater than the pressure outside the can.

If you were to now slam a pencil or similar sharp object into the can of beer (certainly you should never attempt this experiment at home as you will probably waste a lot of beer) it will be forced out of the can in much the same way that your fragile human body would be blown out of the plane should someone drive an enormous pencil into the side of it.

See? Things are blown, not sucked.

This also explains (in a roundabout way) why you needn't worry about the doors to your plane suddenly popping open in mid-flight. Doors on an airplane open inward (even the ones which swing out must first be pulled in slightly).

The pressure differential between the inside and the outside of the plane means that to pull a door inward, you would have to overcome a net outward pressure of many thousands of pounds. Just how macho are you?

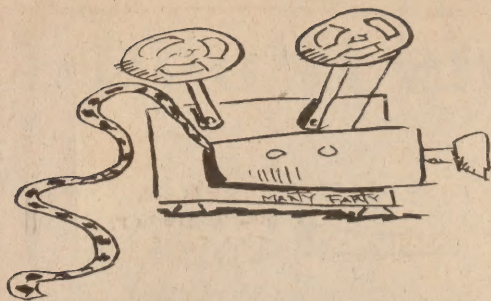


WRITE!!!

Mad-Dog: Master of the Universe
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Orlando, FL 32817

Mad-Dog e-mail hotline:
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SEND COOKIES!!!!

IMPACT press - March 1996



FILM-O-RAMA

with Anthony Torres

LIBERATED FROM INDEPENDENT FILM IN 1996

It's an odd world. One where the good aren't necessarily rewarded for their efforts. Where the talk has to be superior to the walk. This isn't right. It just is. This is the world as it has always been, and film is not excluded from perceived value over-shadowing a movie's actual worth. Its just more apparent if one reveres film as the only pure thing in one's life and comes to see that the film scene is beyond corrupt with people pursuing "buzz" and "star power" rather than advancing the state of cinema in 1996.

Granted, as independent filmmakers, a film released in 1996 is more likely to be shot in 1993 or 1994, and written a year or two prior. So its an accumulation of sensibilities from the first draft of the screenplay to the final timed answer print. I've come across a film that screened at the Independent Feature Film Market in 1995 that was shot in 1991. It took that filmmaker four years to arrange post production financing. Safe to say, after two years the passion turns to obsession and the film **MUST** be completed *or else*. I'm all for it, damn it! Sure its self destructive and in the grand scheme of life worthless, but hey, if not film, drugs, right?

(At times I regret pumping money into film rather than my nervous system in my late teens/early twenties. Sure, I'd have nothing to show for that time period of my life, but dollar for dollar drugs would have me feeling a lot better. But then again, excessive drug users are annoying and have to quit anyhow, so why start what you can't finish? Ditto for film.)

Bitter? Hell yeah. I was sold the "Film is Sacred" schlep of the mid 80's only to find that the cow has been killed and 98% of today's filmmakers are feeding off its rotted remains for pure self-indulgence/ego gratification. This bitterness is a good thing, as I can acknowledge "Trash is trash and clean

is clean" and appreciate the 2% of filmmakers I believe show promise. That I feel have something to contribute to the aesthetics of cinema. Not something witty, nutty reworking of a genre, but rather something that validates a thought, an emotion or form of existence.

Okay, so I'm exaggerating. Maybe 98% is too high of a number. Whatever. Its us vs. them, me versus the world. I'm not paranoid-I'm persecuted! Understand? I appreciate the people I've met that have had such faith in their work (without being Me! Me! Me! egoists) that through association I get excited and re-energized and believe the world isn't a skewed planet overflowing with superficiality.

What makes a film a cleansing experience rather than a dirtying waste of time? The filmmaker. Jim McBride, director of pseudo-documentary "David Holzman's Diary," and the remake of "Breathless," said in 1969 "I don't know about that (claim that just a few people have anything interesting to say or an original way of saying it.) I distinguish only between people who are *more* - or *less*- honest with themselves. I don't think you can avoid expressing yourself through what you do. Take the example of even a rotten, hack director. His films are dishonest and pretentious. Yet they're a perfect expression of what he is. Because he made them. And you see him through them." I wonder what drives people to do something as stupid as make movies. There are cleaner ways of making a living, or in 98% of all independent filmmakers, losing money. That's why I say forget it. I'll work two jobs. I'll start my own business. And I'll make movies to fuck shit up.

That's why I want all my filmmaking friends to succeed. I know they are dangerous. I know they can change things because that's just who they are. Its the early quarter

of 1996. I predict in a year things will be in favor of the cineastes. Fuck the independents who want to be bought up by the small distributors. May your mother have my nuts on her chin. Every four years a developing cinematic ripple is prematurely called the "fill-in-blank wave." And sadly, the founders of that ripple spawn a monstrosity of half-assed, half-hearted clones and cash-ins. Its the case of people seeing a movie they love and going and making a movie just like that movie they loved.

It brings to mind the motivational question "What's the difference between a million dollar filmmaker and you?" "A million dollars?" **WRONG! THE DIFFERENCE IS YOU!** Jim McBride said "talented people are those who get closer to themselves somehow. They're able to be more direct and uncompromising... Its not what's in their heads, but in their relations to themselves. It may be a terribly tortured neurotic relationship, but the honesty comes through, somehow."

This exact sentiment has been echoed by McBride's classmate Martin Scorsese. The struggle for a powerful film doesn't begin with the budget or lack of one. The struggle is primarily internal. This fuels the writing, the means of production, and the filmmaker's handling of the film once completed. Its hard to maintain the same drive one has when one starts a film, because the writing demons are exorcised by completion of the script, the directing demons are exorcised at the end of principal photography, and the editing demons, etc. You'll have different emotions driving you during varying stages of creation which affects what kind of energy you'll put into the film. And as soul-mates will separate, so may your ties to your film. So best have a strong backbone, because if you're winded and emotionally purged through the

(INDIE, continued on page 22)

Criminal Custody

(ABUSE, continued from page 13)

judge in the civil case, rather than the State Attorney's office acting on it's own. However, she did say that in a case where a person fails to show up for a subpoena, the State Attorney does initiate a perjury charge.

When speaking of the State Attorney's course of action, Gold spoke of charges, but the intake process, which she personally oversees, is in charge of deciding whether a referral from a judge ever has the potential evidence backing it to become a charge. *Can we prove it is the question she asks.*

Judges have stopped trying to even refer obvious cases of perjury to the State Attorney because they feel their efforts are hopeless. The political unpopularity of calling someone who alleges abuse a liar may or may not be the cause behind the State Attorney's failure to exercise a deterrent for false claims. Either way, the system has broken down to allow the burden of proof to be placed on the innocent.

As to the potential of any of this year's 1,300 domestic violence cases being processed for perjury, Gold said, "I think that's a big number, and for me to not see so many cases coming through is odd. I think it would be great to get some uniformity."

F.B.I. Phone Tag

(WIRETAP, continued from page 7)

oppose law enforcement? Once the wiretaps are so convenient for law enforcement, what movie or television producer would dare to create a program critical of law enforcement or documentaries of enforcement abuses? And even more critical, once operational, what government whistle-blower would dare talk to a reporter?

The government, in its efforts to win the war on drugs, has been given some additional support. Unfortunately, that support is also going to violate some of the basic principles and civil rights that this nation has held dear for over two centuries. As a marginalized society, one that does not yield much political power, consider the value of such legislation. Anything that infringes on privacy or takes away from what limited power Americans possess should be perceived as a threat, no matter how indirect it may seem. As a nation, it must be made clear that misuse of this new system, directed at any individual, will not be tolerated. It seems that there is an obvious legislative trend to stifle freedom in this country for the sake of security. What good is having security if you're living in a prison?

Dangerous Blood

(BLOOD, continued from page 8)

nate their own blood before surgery, and have that blood available to them during the operation. By using autologous blood, the transfusion is a perfect match of blood type, and the threat of exposure to contaminated blood is virtually nonexistent. The United States Cryobanks of Orlando, Florida, are one of the leaders in the storage of frozen autologous blood. After a battery of ten tests, blood

is stored in special freezer chambers. According to the FDA, this method of storage is good for up to 10 years. USCF offers companies and organizations the opportunity to establish

"safe-blood pools". The donated blood is held for six months to eliminate the window period associated with HIV, and then put into a general pool for use by the company or group's members. This provides another alternative to the traditional blood banking system.

Of all Americans who can give blood, only about five percent actually donate. But approximately 95 percent of all Americans will need a blood transfusion at some point in their lives.

While protecting the blood supply from disease is a fundamental concern, Dr. Pratt says that the greatest threat to the blood banking industry "is simply a lack of blood." In cities such as Washington, New York and Cleveland, appeals for blood donors are commonplace on local television. It appears the dwindling blood supply is only getting worse. Of all Americans who can give blood,

only about five percent actually donate. But approximately 95 percent of all Americans will need a blood transfusion at some point in their lives, particularly when they are older and more susceptible

to infectious diseases.

Even with heightened awareness about the dangers of HIV and improved new testing methods, the blood supply remains threatened. Only time will tell its ability to survive and provide for those in need of this limited resource.

Indie Film 1996

(INDIE, continued from page 21)

experience of the film half-way through editing, you'll have to rely on that backbone (i.e. commitment to yourself) to carry you to completion. Christ, as bad as hack films are, you have to give that person credit for the feat of finishing that stinker.

As confident as I am about my friends rising above contemporary "independent cinema" mediocrity and changing their ability to make movies from one every four years to one every two or less years, I'm apprehensive over "taking over the world!" If you define and take pride in yourself on being against the current system, what happens when you become absorbed and embraced by that system? Turn to drugs? Turn to religion? Turn to putty and allow yourself to be molded by subtle influence? Or do you forget all you've said, chalk it up to youthful anger, and go on as you were? Who's to tell but time. So in a year... I'll be happier. Changes will have come. So start changing NOW!

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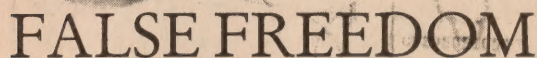
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Church and State most definitely lack a definitive line when it comes to sexuality. Homosexuality is a sin, those religious claim. So be it your religious views. Again, the simple matter is that not all live by your religious laws. Why is our government so keen to legislation based on religious belief? Why is it so often that our freedom is restricted by government action, the same government to profess free-

Are we taught that once we are better than the rest, we can quit? No, we are taught to strive for perfection - to fight for the causes of equality and freedom. We must take our lives into our own hands, answer our questions for ourselves and make accountable those who disobey the laws of freedom and equality. And a few of us still believe that idea. But not America. She prefers to bask in the glory of her first place finish in the Race for Freedom. But the victory has only come by default. No one finished the race. We just got the closest.

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